

God and the church. Legends and history were of equal value, since both were used for edification. The truth of either was unimportant.

718. Success policy in **the** Italian Renaissance. The historical period in which the success policy was pursued most openly and unreservedly was the Italian Renaissance. The effect on all virtue, especially on truthfulness of speech and character, was destructive, and all the mores of the period were marked by the choice of the code of conduct which disregards truth. The most deep-lying and far-reaching cause of societal change was the accumulation of capital and the development of a capitalistic class. New developments in the arts awakened hope and enterprise, and produced a "boundless passion for discovery" in every direction.¹ The mediaeval church system did not contain as much obscurantism in Italy as in some other countries, and the interests of the Italians were intertwined with the hierarchical interests of Rome in many ways. It flattered Italian pride and served Italian interests that Rome should be the center of the Christian world. Every person had ties with the church establishment either directly or by relatives. In spite of philosophic freedom of thought or moral contempt for the clergy, "it was a point of good society and refined taste to support the church." "It was easy for Germans and Englishmen to reason calmly about dethroning the papal hierarchy. Italians, however they might loathe the temporal power, could not willingly forego the spiritual primacy of the civilized world." Thus the Renaissance pursued its aims, which

were distinctly worldly, with a superficial good-fellowship towards the church institution.² " The attitude of the upper and middle classes of Italy towards the church, at the height of the Renaissance, is a combination of deep and contemptuous dislike with accommodation towards the hierarchy as a body deeply interwoven with actual life, and with a feeling of dependence on sacraments and ritual. All this was crossed, too, by the influence of great and holy preachers." ³

¹ Symonds, *Renaissance*, III, 320.

² *Ibid.*) I, 390-405.

³ Burckhardt, *Renaissance* 458.